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## NEW ENGLAND AND OLD ITALY

BY POLLY KING

*With original illustrations by Henry P. Smith.*

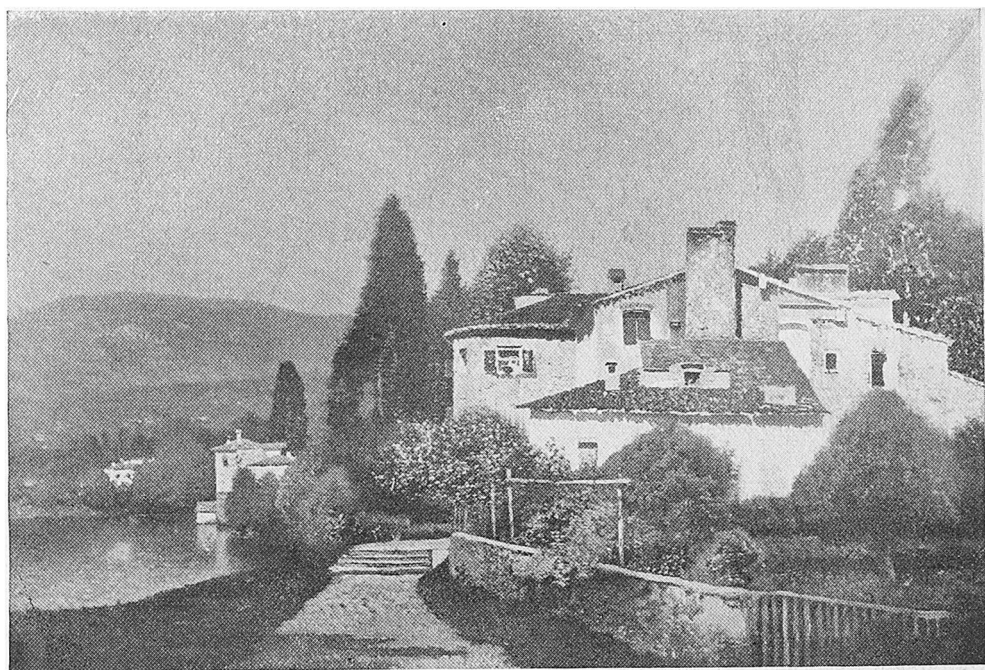
At the present time, when none of our young painters seem content, unless they bring home each fall a collection of canvases portraying the crooked streets of some little out-of-the-way French town; or the woods and fields that some great French artist has painted and pronounced artistic, there is a certain rest and relief in the character of Henry P. Smith's Connecticut sketches.

Rural New England, with its crumbling old homesteads, picturesque with worn and weather-beaten paint; its gnarled old apple-orchards and its grassy lanes, is a subject full of charm for an artist's brush. From May until September what a wealth of changing color—of unfolding beauty! From the drift of white apple-blossoms and fields of daisies, on through July when all runs riot in luxuriance of foliage and flower, and the wayside fences are buried in masses of creepers and flaunting weeds, to the time of the golden-rod, when the whole land flames with the glory of turning leaves!

If we have not the favorite "cocliquot," so dear to the hearts of the impressionists, have we not our distinctive blue gentian, which turns the New England hillsides into a dreamy haze of blue? As for those who feel that we have no atmosphere, that our colors are crude, and our byways dull and philistine, let them lay to heart some of the canvases shown in the recent exhibitions of pictures by the



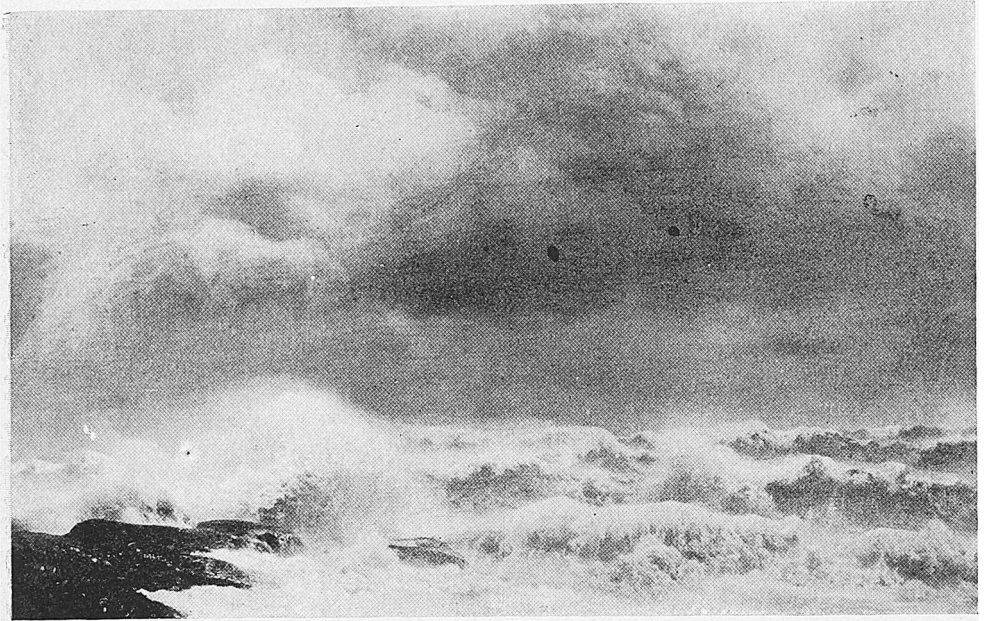
SKETCH AT THE BOAT-BUILDER'S, VENICE



THE SHORES OF LAKE LUGANO



THE OLD TURNPIKE, EAST LYNNE, CONNECTICUT



THE APPROACHING STORM

late George Inness. Groves of turning maples, that glowed through the luminous light of smoky Indian-summer days; still pools of cool water, shadowed by the luxuriant growth of trees, where cattle waded knee-deep in soft lush meadows; all are there, as beautiful as his master-hand portrayed it, not with the atmosphere of France or England, but with our own distinctly American climatic effects.

There is one part of the world, however, which we may never equal in charm, which, in spite of all we know of it, for all the thousands of times that it has been painted, is in itself ever new in its wondrous and unique beauty. This is the city of Venice, which, like Ninon d'Ecos, boasts more lovers in her age and decay than in the prime of her youth and loveliness. What the subtle mystery of her fascination is, who can say? It cannot be copied or transported. The gondolas on the Chicago lake were veritable ugly ducklings, which had once been swans to those who have floated in the moonlight down the Grand Canal. Florence has been modernized out of all recognition—there is even talk of remodeling the old bridge that Taddeo Gaddi built. Tramcars run about the Eternal City, but Venice still stands entrenched amidst her canals, against the march of modern improvements, as in the Middle Ages against the Goths and the Vandals. The places that Turner painted early in the century have scarcely changed a stone, the sky-lines of palace and the domes of St. Mark's are just the same; and, best of all, the same sunrises as in former days, gilding the whole city into the magical dreamlike light which Turner,



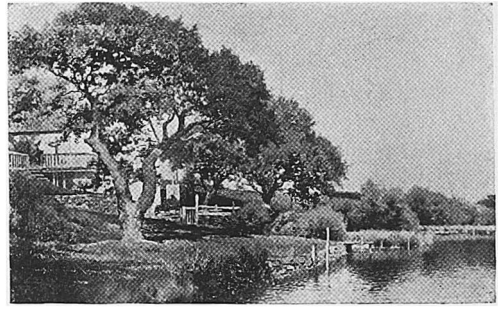
THE OLD OAK

better than any one, perhaps, was able to catch and fix upon his canvas; to "fix," alas! with something of its own fleeting loveliness, as his blackened and faded pictures are now only a memory of what they were.

Mr. Whistler is a more modern devotee, with his subtle etchings, and the symphonies of color which are so true to the winding waterways.

One of the fascinations of Venice, as Mr. Smith shows us in the illustrations printed herewith, is that, wonderful as it is in atmosphere, appealing alike to the finest artistic perception, as well as to the amateur out with his water-color-box, it is equally fine in detail and in the interior decorations of churches and palaces, for no explosions and revolutions have swept away the work of generations. As things were builded, so they have remained, and even the tapestries on the walls seem part of the original design. As for the mosaics and stone-carvings, the bronze fountains in the courtyards, and so forth, each is still a perfect lesson in the art of the artisan, who made of his work a thing of everlasting beauty.

In the wonderful pen-pictures which Theophile Gautier has drawn of Venice, in his "Travels through Italy," there comes a moment when even his exuberant fancy pauses, when a solemn dignity falls over his roseate descriptions. It is as he stands before Titian's "Descent from the Cross," which bears the touching inscription: "La dernier peinture." In this, the home of Titian, it strikes one

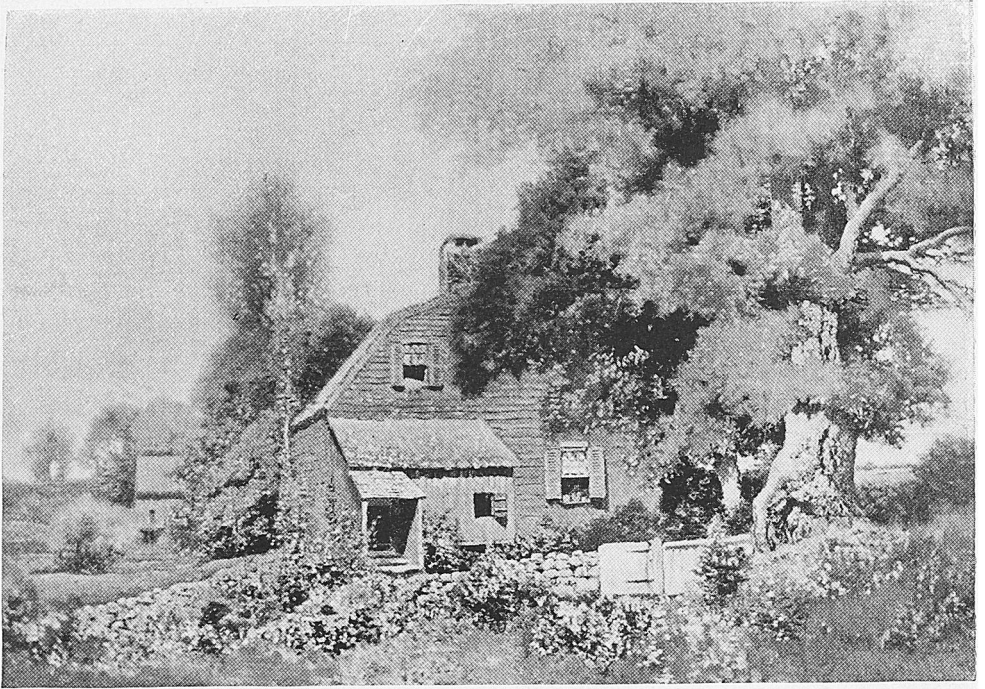


AN APPLE-ORCHARD ON THE NIAN TIC RIVER,  
CONNECTICUT



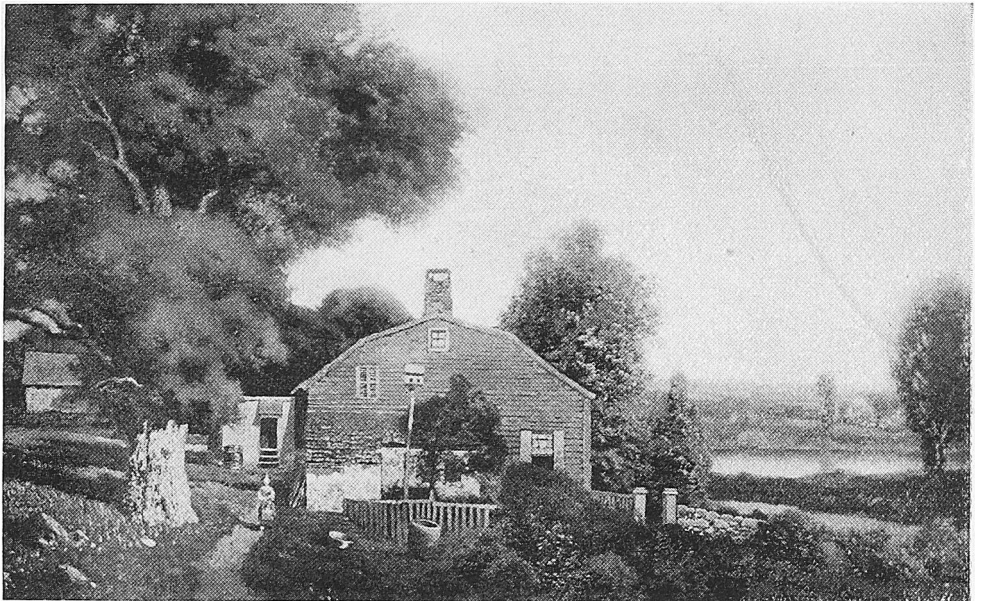
NEAR THE PUBLIC GARDENS, VENICE





AN OLD-FASHIONED GARDEN

rather sadly that the most celebrated of his works are scattered through the museums and picture-galleries all over Europe. Many of them left Venice during his life-time, going to royal patrons in Spain and elsewhere.



THE OLD HOMESTEAD, EAST LYNNE, CONNECTICUT